

l ABSTRACT

2	An online system and method for allowing a prospective
3	buyer to complete an electronic RFP document and to have the
4	RFP document transmitted to one or more appropriate
5	prospective sellers of goods and services. The system and
6	method provide the prospective buyer with the option of
7	automatically identifying potentially appropriate sellers by
8	means of key word searches in a compiled database of vendor
9	information and product and services descriptions. The
10	prospective buyer may also elect to review the database
11	contents "manually" by means of selecting specific subject
12	matter areas or incrementally reviewing a list of database
13	vendors one at a time. The system directs the buyer's RFP to
14	the selected vendors for review and consideration. This
15	transmission is made electronically, typically by email
16	protocols, for review by appropriate personnel at the
17	selected vendor's business. Such review is carried out by an
18	individual or automatically by the vendor's own system which
19	identifies the appropriateness of the match with its range of
20	offered goods and services. A proposal or price quote is
21	then transmitted electronically back through the system to
22	the prospective buyer for consideration, again typically by
23	email protocols. The buyer may then review the various
24	proposals and price quotes it receives back for consideration

- 1 and may select an appropriate vendor with which to carry out
- 2 the commercial transaction.